

## Under the Moons of Mars

A Wonder Romance by the Creator of "TARZAN"

By Edgar Rice Burroughs

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CHAPTER I.  
The Martians.

AM John Carter—once Captain in the Confederate Army, and now a very old man; how old I do not know.

At the Civil War's close I went West, prospecting.

Attacked by hostile Indians, I took refuge in a mountain cave, from which emanated a poisonous gas. Overcome by this, I seemed to undergo a physical metamorphosis, some inherent part of me being released so that I could view, like a second person, my seemingly lifeless body lying on the cave's floor. In this state, through a series of phenomena that need not be recounted here, I found myself transported to the planet Mars. There I was hurled upon a series of adventures among a people, gigantic, six-limbed and hideous ("green Martians," I called them), who, surrounded by the armies and hosts of burden-like those of the prehistoric earth—found in me a fascinating captive.

I was guarded by a Martian woman, Sola, and a Martian "watch dog," a kindly, though terrible-looking, ten-legged animal. In one of my endeavors to escape I was attacked by a pair of fiendish white apes of Mars.

One of these monsters seized me and dashed me to the ground. The thing, which more nearly resembled our earthly men than it did the Martians, I had seen, held me in its arms, and I felt its hot breath on my face. It was a creature of a different order, while it jabbered and gesticulated at the creature behind me.

This other, which was evidently its mate, soon came toward us, bearing a mighty stone cudgel with which it evidently intended to brain me.

The creatures were about fifteen feet tall, standing erect, and had, like the green Martians, an intermediary set of arms or legs, midway between their upper and lower limbs.

Their eyes were closer together and non-protruding; their ears were high set but more laterally located than those of the Martians, while their snouts and teeth were strikingly like those of our African gorilla.

Altogether they were not unlovely when viewed by comparison with the green Martians.

The cudgel was swinging in the air which ended upon my upturned face when a bolt of myriad-legged horror hurled itself through the doorway full upon my executioner.

With a shriek of fear the ape which held me leaped through the open window, but its mate closed in a terrible death struggle with the creature, which was nothing less than my faithful watch-dog—I cannot bring myself to call so hideous a creature dog.

As quickly as possible I gained my feet, and backing against the wall I witnessed such a battle as is vouchsafed few beings to see. The strength, agility and blind ferocity of these two creatures is attached by nothing known to earthly man.

My boat had an advantage in his first hold, having sunk his mighty fangs far into the breast of his adversary, but the great arms and paws of the ape, backed by muscles far transcending those of the Martian men I had seen, had locked the throat of my guardian.

My guardian, however, was not checking out his life, and bending back his head and neck upon his body, where I momentarily expected to see the former fall limp at the end of a broken neck.

In accomplishing this the ape was tearing away the entire front of its breast, which was held in the vise-like grip of the powerful jaws. Back and forth upon the floor, the ape and the creature, emitting a sound of fear or pain.

Presently I saw the great eyes of my beast bulging completely from their sockets and the creature, from its nostrils. That he was weakening perceptibly was evident, but so also was the ape, whose struggles were slowing momentarily less.

Suddenly I saw myself and, with that strange instinct which seems ever to prompt me to my duty, I seized the cudgel, which had fallen to the floor at the back of the creature, and swinging it with all the power of my earthly arms I crashed it full upon the head of the ape, crushing his skull as though it had been an eggshell.

Soaring back the blow descended when I was confronted with a new danger.

The brute's mate, recovered from its first shock of terror, had returned to the scene of the encounter by way of the interior of the building.

I glimpsed him just before he reached the door, and the slight glow of his nostrils as he perceived his lifeless fellow stretched upon the floor, and frothing at the mouth in the extremity of his rage, filled me with dire forebodings.

I am willing to stand and fight when the odds are not too overwhelming against me, but in this instance I perceived neither glory nor profit. In pitying me, my strength against the iron muscles and ferocity of this enraged demoniac of an unknown world; in fact, the only outcome of such an encounter as far as I might be concerned, seemed sudden death.

I was standing near the window and saw that once in the street I might gain the plaza and safety before the creature could overtake me; at least there was a chance for safety in flight against almost certain death should I remain and fight.

It is true I held the cudgel, but what could I do with it against his four great arms?

Even should I break one of them with my first blow, for I figured that he would attempt to ward off the cudgel, he could reach out and annihilate me with the others before I could recover for a second attack.

In the instant that these thoughts passed through my mind I had turned to make for the window, but my eyes alighting on the form of my erstwhile guardian, I saw that he was still alive.

He lay grasping upon the floor of the chamber, his great eyes fastened upon me in what seemed a pitiful appeal for protection.

I could not withstand that look, nor could I, on second thought, have deserted my rescuer without giving as good an account of myself in his behalf as he had in mine.

Without ado, therefore, I turned to meet the charge of the infuriated ape. He was now too close upon me for the cudgel to prove of any effective assistance, so I merely thrust it as heavily as I could at his advancing bulk. It struck him just below the knees, eliciting a howl of pain and rage and so throwing him off his balance that he lunged full upon me with arms wide stretched to ease his fall.

Again, as on the preceding day, I had recourse to earthly tactics, and swinging my right fist full upon the point of his chin I followed it with a smashing left to the pit of his stomach. The effect was marvelous.

CHAPTER II.  
The Children of Mars.

AFTER a breakfast, which was an exact replica of the meal of the preceding day and an index of practically every meal which followed while I was with the green men of Mars, Sola escorted me to the plaza, where I found the entire community engaged in watching or helping at the harnessing of huge mastodon-like animals to great three-wheeled chariots.

There were about 250 of these vehicles, each drawn by a single animal, any one of which, from their appearance, might easily have drawn the entire wagon train when fully loaded.

The chariots themselves were of large dimensions, commodious and very gorgeously decorated.

In each was seated a female Martian loaded with ornaments of metal, with jewels and silks and furs, and upon the back of each of the beasts which drew the chariots was perched a young Martian driver. Like the animals upon which the warriors were mounted, the heavier draught animals wore neither bit nor bridle, but were guided entirely by telepathic means.

This power is wonderfully developed in all Martians, and accounts largely for the simplicity of their language and the relatively few spoken words necessary even in long conversations.

On either side of this opening the woman and the younger Martians, both male and female, formed two

solid walls leading out through the chariots and quite away into the plain beyond. Between these walls the little Martians were able to communicate to a greater or less extent, depending upon the intellectual sphere of the species and the development of the individual.

As the chariots took up the line of march in single file, Sola dragged me into an empty chariot and we proceeded with the procession toward the city which I had entered the day before.

At the head of the caravan rode some two hundred warriors, five abreast, and a like number brought up the rear, while twenty-five or thirty outriders flanked us on either side.

Every one but myself—men, women and children—was heavily armed, and at the tail of each chariot trotted a small, dark, hairy creature, following closely behind us; in fact, the faithful creature never left me voluntarily during the entire time I spent on Mars.

Our first led out across the little valley before the city, through the hills and down into the dead sea bottom which I had traversed on my journey from the incubator to the plaza.

The incubator, as it proved, was the terminal point of our journey this day, and as the entire cavalcade broke into a mad gallop as soon as we reached the level expanse of sea bottom, we were soon within sight of our goal.

On reaching it the chariots were parked with military precision on the four sides of the inclosure, and half a score of warriors, headed by the enormous chief, and including Tars Tarkas and several other lesser chiefs, dismounted and advanced toward it.

I could see Tars Tarkas explaining something to the principal chieftain, whose name, as I can translate it into English, Lorquas Ptomel, Jed-Jed being his title.

I was soon apprised of the subject of the conversation, as, calling to me, Tars Tarkas signed for her to send me to him. I had by this time mastered the intricacies of walking under Martian conditions, and quickly responding to his command, I advanced to the side of the incubator where the party of warriors stood.

As I reached their side a glance showed me that not a very few eggs had hatched, the incubator being fairly alive with the hideous little devils.

They ranged in height from three to four feet, and were moving restlessly about the inclosure as though searching for food.

As I came to a halt before him, Tars Tarkas pointed, over the incubator and said "See."

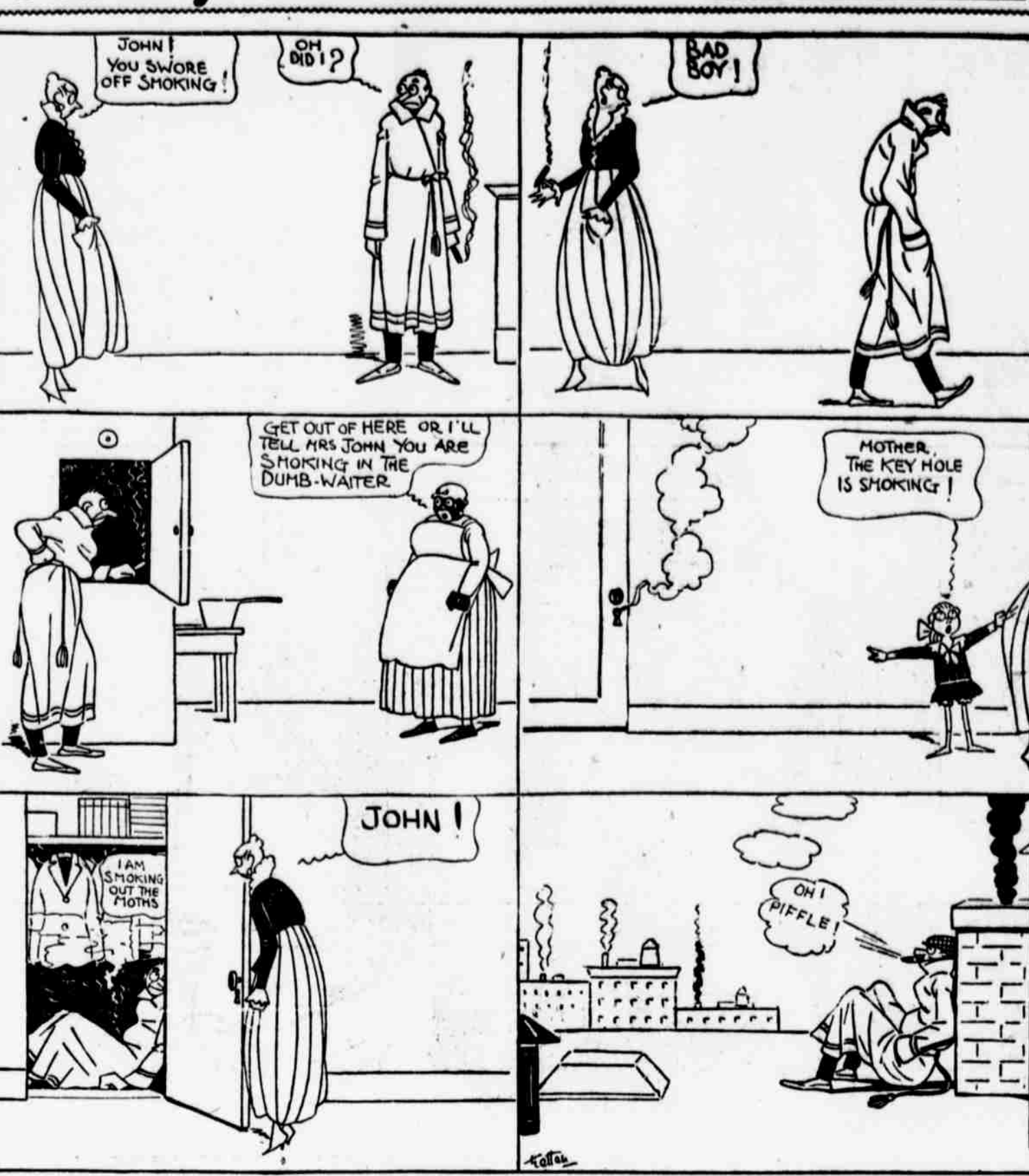
I responded quickly, leaping entirely over the parked chariots on the far side of the incubator. The atmosphere of Mars, so much lighter than ours, made this easy. As I returned, Lorquas Ptomel grunted something at me, and turning to his warriors, gave a few words of command relative to the incubator.

They paid no further attention to me, and I was thus permitted to remain close and watch their operations, which consisted in breaking an opening in the wall of the incubator large enough to permit of the exit of the young Martians.

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## The Day of Rest

By Maurice Ketten



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hidden in the recesses of some subterranean vault where the temperature is too low for incubation. Every year these eggs are carefully examined by a council of twenty chieftains, and all but about one hundred of the most perfect are destroyed out of each yearly supply.

At the end of five years about five hundred almost perfect eggs have been chosen from the thousands brought forth. These are then placed in the almost airtight incubators to be hatched by the sun's rays after a period of another five years.

The hatching which we had witnessed today was a fairly representative event of its kind, all but about one percent of the eggs hatching in one day.

If the remaining eggs ever hatched we know nothing of the fate of the little Martians. They were not wanted, as their offspring might inherit and transmit the tendency to prolonged incubation, and thus upset the system which has maintained for ages and which permits the adult Martians to figure the proper time for return to the incubators almost to an hour.

The incubators are built in remote fastnesses, where there is little or no likelihood of their being discovered by other tribes. The result of such a catastrophe would mean no children in the community for another five years.

I was later to witness the outcome of the discovery of an alien incubator. The community of which the green Martians with whom my lot was cast formed a part was composed of some thirty thousand souls.

They roamed an enormous tract of arid and semi-arid land between 40 and 80 degrees south latitude, and bounded on the east and west by two large fertile tracts. Their headquarters lay in the southwest corner of this district near the crossing of two of the so-called Martian canals.

As the incubator had been placed far north of their own territory in a sparsely uninhabited and unfrequented area, we had before us a tremendous journey, concerning which I, of course, knew nothing.

After our return to the dead city I passed several days in comparative idleness. On the day following our return all the warriors had ridden forth early in the morning and had not returned until just before dark came on.

As I later learned, they had been to the subterranean vaults in which the eggs were kept, and had transported them to the incubator, which they had then waited up for another five years, and which, in all probability would not be visited again during that period.

The vaults which hid the eggs until they were ready for the incubator were located many miles south of the former, and would be visited yearly by the council of twenty chieftains.

Why they did not arrange to build their vaults and incubators nearer home has always been a mystery to me, and like many other Martian mysteries, unsolved and unexplainable by the light of earthly reasoning and customs.

Sola's duties were now doubled, as she was compelled to care for the young Martians as well as for me, but neither one of us required much attention, and as we were both about equally advanced in Martian education Sola took it upon herself to train us together.

Her first consisted in a male about four feet tall, very strong and erect physically; also, he learned quickly, and we had considerable amusement, at least I did, over the rivalry we displayed.

Tars Tarkas, as I have said, is extremely simple, and in a week I could make all my wants known and understand nearly everything that was said to me. Likewise, under Sola's tutelage, I developed my telepathic powers so that I shortly could sense practically everything that went on around me.

What surprised Sola most in me was that, while I could catch telepathic messages easily from others, and often when they were not intended for me, no one could read my mind under any circumstances. At first this vexed me, but later I was very glad of it, as it gave me an undoubted advantage over the Martians.

CHAPTER III.  
Prizes and Prisoners.

THE third day after the incubator ceremony we set forth toward home, but scarce had we reached the head of the procession debouched into the open ground before the city than orders were given for an immediate and hasty return.

As though trained for years in this particular evolution, the green Martians melted like mist into the episode doorways of the temple buildings, until, in less than three minutes, the entire cavalcade of chariots, mastodons and mounted warriors was nowhere to be seen.

Sola and I had entered a building upon the front of the city, in fact, the same one in which I had had my encounter with the apes, and, wishing to see what had caused the sudden retreat, I mounted to an upper floor and peered from the window out over the valley and the hills beyond, and there I saw it, the cause of their sudden scurrying to cover.

A huge craft, long, low and gray painted, swung slowly over the crest of the nearest hill. Following it came another, and another, and another, until twenty of them, swinging low above the ground, sailed slowly and majestically toward us.

Each carried a strange banner swung from stem to stern above the upper works, and upon the prow of each was painted some odd device that gleamed in the sunlight and showed plainly even at the distance at which we were from the vessels. I could see figures crowding the forward decks and upper works of the aircraft.

Whether they had discovered us or simply were looking at the deserted city I could not say, but in any event they received a rude reception, for suddenly and without warning the

green Martian warriors fired a terrific volley from the windows of the buildings facing the little valley across which the great ships were so peacefully advancing.

Instantly the scene changed as by magic: the foremost vessel swung broadside toward us, and, bringing her guns into play, returned our fire, at the same time moving parallel to our front for a short distance and then turning back with the evident intention of completing a great circle which would bring her up to position once more opposite our firing line.

The other vessels followed in her wake, each one opening upon us as she swung into position. I doubt if 25 per cent. of our shots went wild.

It had never been given me to see such deadly accuracy of aim, and it seemed as though a little figure on one of the craft dropped at the expenditure of each shot. For example, the lower and upper works dissolved in spurts of flame as the projectiles of our warriors moved through them.

The fire from the vessels was most ineffective, owing to the fact that I had learned, to the unexpected suddenness of the first volley, which caught the ship's crew entirely unprepared, and the sighting apparatus of the guns unprotected from the deadly aim of our warriors.

It seems that each green warrior has certain objective points for his fire under relatively identical circumstances of warfare. For example, a proportion of them, always the best marksmen, direct their fire entirely upon the wireless finding and sighting apparatus of the big guns of any vessel which is in position to attack. Others, again, concentrate their attention upon the other members of the crew, upon the upper works, and upon the steering gear and propellers.

Twenty minutes after the first volley the great fleet swung, trailing off in the direction from which they had first appeared. Several of the craft were limping perceptibly, and seemed but barely under the control of their duped crews.

Their fire had ceased entirely and all their energies seemed focused upon escape. Our warriors, who had rushed up to the roof of the building which we occupied and followed the retreating armada with a continuous fusillade of deadly fire.

One by one, however, the crests of the ships began to dip, and the last, a small, swiftly moving craft was in sight. This had received the brunt of our fire, and seemed as though it was about to be swamped by the great vessels upon her decks.

Slowly she swung from her course, circling back toward us in an erratic and pitiful manner, until she was within a few feet of the building.

Instantly the warriors ceased firing, for it was quite apparent that the vessel was entirely helpless, and, far from being in a position to inflict harm upon us, could not even control herself sufficiently to escape.

As she neared the city the warriors rushed out upon the plain to meet her, but it was evident that they were not there for them to hope to reach her decks.

From my vantage point in the window I could see the bodies of her crew strewn about, although I could not make out in what manner of creatures they might be.

Not a sign of life was manifest upon her as she drifted slowly with the light breeze above the ground in a southerly direction.

She was drifting some fifty feet, followed by all but some hundred of the warriors who had been ordered to hole to the roofs to the possibility of a return of the fleet, or of reinforcements.

It soon became evident that she would strike the face of the building, and I watched the progress of the chase as a number of warriors galloped ahead, dismounting and entering the building as she seemed destined to enter it.

The craft neared the building, and just before she struck, the Martian warriors swarmed upon her from the windows, and with strange cries and shouts of triumph, and in a few moments they had thrown out grappling hooks and the big boat was being hauled to ground by their fellows below.

After the craft had been fastened to the ground and the vessel from stem to stern, they swarmed the sides and searched the vessel from stem to stern.

I could see them examining the dead sailors, evidently for signs of life, and presently a party of them appeared from below dragging a little figure among them.

The creature was considerably less than half as tall as the green Martian warriors, and from my balcony I could see that it walked erect upon two legs, and surmised that it was some new and strange creature, one with which I had not as yet become acquainted.

They removed their prisoner to the ground and then commenced a systematic rifling of the vessel's contents. This operation required several hours, during which time a number of chariots were requisitioned to transport the loot, which consisted in arms, ammunition, silks, furs, jewels, strangely carved stone vessels, and a quantity of solid foods and liquids, including many casks of water, the first I had seen since my advent upon Mars.

After the last load had been fastened to the craft and towed her far out into the valley, a few of them then boarded her and were busily engaged in what appeared, from my distant position, as the emptying of the contents of various carboys upon the dead bodies of the sailors and over the decks and works of the vessel.

This operation concluded, they hastily clambered over her sides, sliding down the ropes to the ground. The last was to leave the deck turned and threw something back upon the vessel, waiting an instant to note the outcome of his act.

As a faint spurt of flame rose from the point where the missile struck he swung over the side and was quickly upon the ground. Scarcely had he alighted than the guy ropes were simultaneously released, and a great warship, lightened by the removal of the loot, soared majestically into the air, her decks and upper works a mass of roaring flames.

Slowly she drifted to the southeast, rising higher and higher as the flames ate away her wooden parts and diminished the weight upon her. Ascending to the roof of the building

NEXT WEEK'S COMPLETE NOVEL IN THE EVENING WORLD

## The Great Shadow

By SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

SERIES OF "SHADOWS" NOVELS

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